

## **Gorge Dam Removal Stakeholders Meeting**

Notes September 19, 2019 Meeting  
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

SMP, Conservation Department, 2360 Sand Run Parkway, Akron, OH 44333

### **Attendees**

Local Stakeholder: Pat Gsellman, Chris Ludle, Heather Unlinger, Mike Wytryszczewski, Eyad Gheith, Mike Johnson, Elaine Marsh, Stephanie Walton, Chuck Hauber, Megan Shaffer, Charlotte Gintert, Colleen Kelly, Doug Hartman

Jacobs Team: Julie Schucker

USEPA Team: Mary Beth Giancarlo, Mark Loomis

**Notes from June 13, 2018 meeting** The notes were reviewed.

### **Presentation: City of Akron IP (CSO) Work in the Gorge Area**

Pat Gsellman presented an overview of the City's planning related to correction of its combined sewers in the Gorge area. (Copy of presentation attached.). The city is evaluating alternatives for this work: A 24ft. tunnel as outlined in the Consent Decree; a 16 ft. tunnel as indicated by recent modeling; a sewer separation and increased conveyance alternative. They have completed modeling, cost estimates and the benefits of the alternatives. If the City's analysis for an alternative other than the 24 ft. tunnel, they will need to request an amendment to the Consent Decree.

The work is currently scheduled to begin in 2023. There may be opportunities to overlap work with sediment management or dam deconstruction, depending on schedules.

### **Presentation: Summit Metro Parks, Valley View**

Mike Johnson presented an overview of SMP's current and future efforts for this new park. This large parcel extends parkland in the Gorge area to over 1,500 continuous acres which extends from the head of the dam pool to Merriman Valley. To date, restoration from a golf course to natural habitats have included removal of invasives, drain tiles and turf; re-establishing wetlands, forests and stream channels. Future work will include re-establishing the Cuyahoga River floodplain and other stream channel restoration. This work is in design. A visitors' center and other recreational amenities will follow. Much of the restoration funding came through grants from NOAA.

### **Phase II**

Julie Schucker gave a report on the studies to be conducted this fall and a projected schedule. The studies team will visit the site on September 25 and conduct work in late October. Some of the studies include dam pool sediment cores, bathymetry and penetration studies at the deposit and along the geotube line; alignment and access studies (coordinating with local partners, Summit Metro Parks, City of Akron, FirstEnergy and others as needed).

Sediment management design and dam deconstruction design will proceed concurrently. Schedule for the construction will include all Stakeholders, SHPO, other permitting agencies and potential owners.

### **SMP Updates**

Megan reported that SHPO is reviewing documents. When the draft PA is returned, we will have three months to return our comments. After SHPO reviews our comments, we have an opportunity to review and comment on their changes.

SHPO will need to know who the signatories to the MOU will be (can be several).

Mike Johnson reported that the wetland delineation were nearly completed.

### **Power Source**

Doug Hartman reported that First Energy had a power source at the dam which could be used for a dam cam and potentially other uses.

### **Public Outreach Committee**

Stephanie Walton reported that the committee had identified current work with USEPA to include a brochure, a video and an artist's rendering. These products will be completed during Phase II. The committee has a call-in meeting scheduled for the end of the month.

Local members of the Outreach committee will be working on expanding support from local business and elected official.

### **Phase IV, Dam Deconstruction**

Heather Ullinger reported that the City of Akron sent a plan for design of the dam removal to USEPA. The request is for \$1 million and expected to cover 100% of the cost of the design.

### **AOC Conference**

Members who attended the annual AOC conference in Cleveland on September 11 - 12 reported on their experience. All agreed that the meeting, with the largest attendance to date, was extremely valuable.

### **Member Comments**

Members were reminded that the water trail dedication is scheduled for Oct. 4. Several members reported on Xtinguish and other events related to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the last Cuyahoga fire. The Cuyahoga River Homecoming, sponsored by the City of Akron and other Stakeholders, held on June 20 exceeded all expectations despite record high water levels.

**Future Stakeholder Meetings:** Next meeting is December 12 at the Conservation Office of SMP. John Peck from the University of Akron will do a presentation on sediment studies of the dam pool conducted by his graduate students.

Notes drafted by Elaine Marsh, Watershed Specialist, Summit Metro Parks . Please direct questions and comments to: [ [HYPERLINK "mailto:emarsh@summitmetroparks.org"](mailto:emarsh@summitmetroparks.org) ] or (330)328-3909.